

# TEWKSBURY HOSPITAL

## ANNUAL DRINKING WATER QUALITY REPORT

### (Consumer Confidence Report)

### For 2003

To comply with 1996 federal Safe Drinking Water Act amendments (40 CFR Parts 141, 142), the MA Department of Public Health (MDPH) Tewksbury Hospital (public water supply #3295001) is issuing this annual report about its drinking water. The purpose of this report is to advance your understanding of the quality of your drinking water and heighten your awareness of the need to protect precious water resources.

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#### WHERE DOES YOUR WATER COME FROM?

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Tewksbury Hospital's water supply includes two groundwater supply wells and pumping stations, and two one-million gallon storage tanks. The wells are located on the hospital grounds. At this time, Well I is not being used to supply water to the Hospital due to ongoing investigations of environmental contamination nearby. Although the water from Well 1 has not been found to contain levels of contaminants above any regulatory (Drinking Water) criteria, the wellfield has been shut off since December of 2000 as a precaution while the site is being investigated and mitigated under the Massachusetts Contingency Plan (21E) Program.

The Tewksbury Hospital water supply serves all buildings on the hospital grounds; there is also a service connection to the Oblate Fathers Novitiate, an off-site residence for retired priests, located on Chandler Street. This connection is not currently in use.

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#### HOW IS YOUR WATER TREATED?

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The water is disinfected with chlorine, a typical water treatment practice for public water supplies. The Tewksbury Hospital water supply also is currently using chemicals to control the pH and to prevent corrosion in the plumbing. Disinfection, pH adjustment and corrosion control were continuous throughout calendar year 2003.

All reservoirs and some ground water sources contain numerous microorganisms some of which can cause people to be sick. To eliminate disease-carrying organisms it is necessary to disinfect the water. Tewksbury Hospital uses a chlorine compound called sodium hypochlorite for this purpose. Chlorine destroys organisms by penetrating cell walls and reacting with enzymes. Since the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, disinfection with chlorine has been shown to be effective at ensuring that water is free of harmful organisms and safe to drink.

Many drinking water sources in New England, including Tewksbury Hospital's, are naturally acidic (meaning they have a pH of less than 7). This water has a tendency to corrode and dissolve the metal piping it flows through. This not only damages pipes but can also result in the addition of harmful metals, such as lead and copper, to the water. For this reason it is beneficial to add chemicals that provide a protective coating on the inside of the pipe and make the water neutral (having a pH of about 7) or slightly alkaline (having a pH above 7). Tewksbury Hospital adds potassium hydroxide and an orthophosphosphate chemical to its water. The orthophosphosphate, with a trade name of 634-T, is often referred to as an inhibitor and is what coats the inside of the pipe. Potassium hydroxide raises the water's pH to a level at which it is much less corrosive.

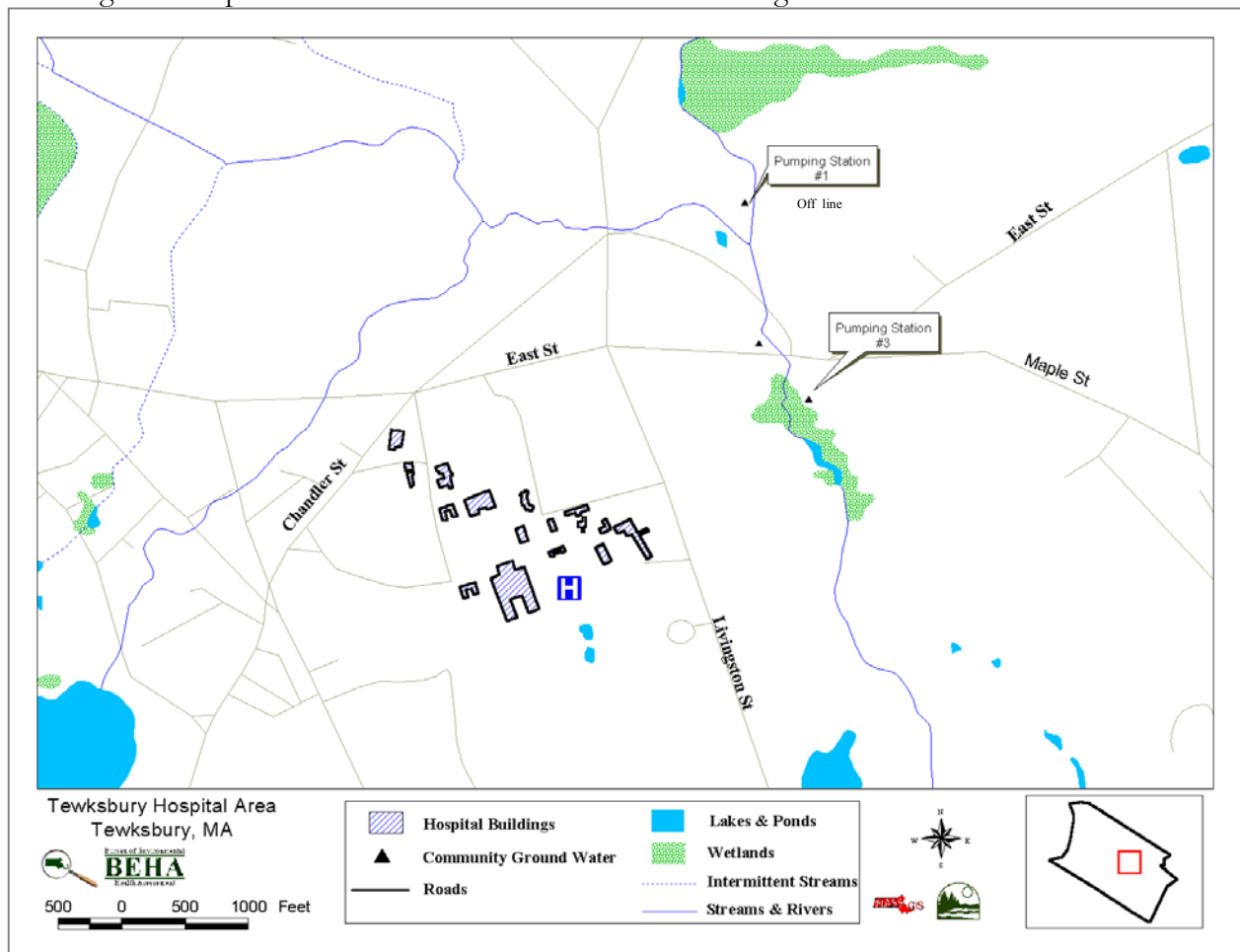
All chemicals used for corrosion control are approved for water treatment by either the National Sanitation Foundation, or Underwriter's Limited, both accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). Water treatment chemicals must also meet performance standards established by the American Water Works Association.

## HOW ARE WE IMPROVING YOUR WATER AND PROTECTING IT FOR THE FUTURE?

During 2003, the Tewksbury Hospital water system was maintained in accordance with good practice. No major changes to water supply or distribution took place over calendar year 2003.

In September of 2001, a contractor to the Department of Environmental Protection completed a report on the Tewksbury Hospital water supply. This report, known as a Zone II delineation, is the result of a process designed to determine where the water that is drawn from Tewksbury Hospital's wells comes from, an area called a Zone II (As well as a Zone III, an area which may additionally contribute to the groundwater.). The report contains a map which shows the groundwater protection Zones II and III, a simplified version of which is presented here. Portions of the Zone II are in the towns of Tewksbury and Andover.

On May 7, 2002, the Town of Tewksbury voted to adopt a bylaw which is designed to prevent new development from negatively impacting the water quality. The bylaw prohibits new dumps, storage and handling of many hazardous materials, the disposal of non-sanitary wastewater, and earth removal which could potentially affect groundwater. Other potentially harmful activities, including rendering significant portions of a lot impervious to groundwater infiltration (such as paving), will require a review and special permit from the Planning Board. A similar bylaw was adopted by the town of Andover at their spring town meeting on April 29, 2003. Although these bylaws do not change existing uses, they will help prevent new hazards. The discussion of groundwater protection at Town Meetings also helped educate individuals in both towns about groundwater within their town boundaries.



Tewksbury Hospital is participating in additional source water assessment with DEP through the Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP). This includes evaluation of potential risks from existing and past land uses throughout the Zone II. A SWAP report has been prepared by DEP based on information from a variety of

sources, including databases of hazardous waste sites, hazardous waste generators, and local knowledge supplied by the hospital. This report will help the hospital and DEP understand any potential hazards to the water supply.

There is also Hospital-owned land inside the Zone II, much of which is used for agriculture through an agreement with the Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture (MDFA). Staff from MDPH's Bureau of Environmental Health Assessment and Tewksbury Hospital are working with MDFA and the individual farmers who use that land to limit the use of pesticides and nitrates and protect the groundwater from potential contamination.

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## SUBSTANCES FOUND IN TAP WATER:

### WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?

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Sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally-occurring minerals, and in some cases, radioactive material. It can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Contaminants that may be present in source water may include:

**Microbial contaminants** -such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.

**Inorganic contaminants** -such as salts and metals, which can be naturally-occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial, or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.

**Pesticides and herbicides** -which may come from a variety of sources such as agricultural, urban stormwater runoff, and residential uses.

**Organic chemical contaminants** -including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.

**Radioactive contaminants** -which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of these contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that must provide the same protection for public health. Listed in the tables on the next two pages are the contaminants detected in Tewksbury Hospital's water supply in 2003. Not listed are over 100 other contaminants for which we tested but did not detect at all.

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## DEFINITIONS

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**Action Level** – the concentration of a contaminant that, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements, which a water system must follow.

**Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG)** – the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

**Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)** – the highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

**Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL)** – The highest level of a disinfectant (chlorine) allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.

**Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG)** – The level of a drinking water disinfectant (chlorine) below which there is not known or expected risk to health. MRDLG's do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

**Secondary Maximum Contaminant Level (SMCL)** -- These standards are developed to protect the aesthetic qualities (e.g., taste, odor or fixture staining) of drinking water and are not health based.

**Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Research and Standards Guideline (ORSG)** – This is the concentration of a chemical in drinking water, at or below which adverse health effects are unlikely to occur after chronic (lifetime) exposure. If exceeded, it serves as an indicator of the potential need for further action.

**Unregulated Contaminants** - Unregulated contaminants are those for which neither EPA nor MDEP has established drinking water standards. The purpose of unregulated contaminant monitoring is to assist EPA and MDEP in determining their occurrence in drinking water and whether future regulation is warranted.

**ppm** – parts per million or milligrams per liter, sometimes written as mg/l

**ppb** – parts per billion or micrograms per liter, sometimes written as µg/l

**pCi/l** – picocuries per liter (a measure of radioactivity)

**mrem/year** – millirems per year (a measure of radiation)

**ND** – substance not detected in sample.

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### WATER QUALITY TESTING RESULTS – TEWKSBURY HOSPITAL – 2003

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CONTAMINANT	90 <sup>TH</sup> PERCENTILE <sup>a</sup>	# OF SITES EXCEEDED	# OF SITES SAMPLED	ACTION LEVEL	MCLG	VIOLATION (Y/N)	POSSIBLE SOURCE OF CONTAMINATION
<b>Lead and Copper Results</b>							
Lead (ppb)	2.0	0	10	15	0	No	Corrosion of plumbing [see Water Quality Summary]
Copper (ppm)	0.095	0	10	1.3	1.3	No	Corrosion of plumbing [see Water Quality Summary]

CONTAMINANT	HIGHEST # OF SAMPLES POSITIVE IN A MONTH (FROM ABOUT TEN SAMPLES PER MONTH)	MCL	MCLG	VIOLATION (Y/N)	POSSIBLE SOURCE OF CONTAMINATION
<b>Microbiological Results</b>					
Total Coliform	1	<5% of samples per month	0	Yes	Naturally present in the environment [see Water Quality Summary]

CONTAMINANT	HIGHEST DETECT VALUE	RANGE DETECTED	MCL	MCLG	VIOLATION (Y/N)	POSSIBLE SOURCE OF CONTAMINATION
<b>Regulated Organic Contaminants</b>						
Chlorine (ppm)	2.6	0.0 - 2.6	4 [MRDL]	4 [MRDLG]	No	Water additive used to control microbes
<b>Regulated Inorganic Contaminants</b>						
Nitrate (ppm)	4.7	3.8 - 4.7	10	10	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic systems or sewage piping; erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm) <sup>a</sup>	0.71	--	4	2 [SMCL]	No	Erosion of natural deposits. Tewksbury Hospital does not add fluoride to its drinking water.
<b>Regulated Radioactive Constituents<sup>a</sup></b>						
Gross Alpha (pCi/l)	0.6 (±1.1)	--	15	0	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Gross Beta (pCi/l)	4.4 (±1.7)	--	50 <sup>b</sup>	0	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Radium 226 and 228 combined (pCi/l)	0.6	--	5	5	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Radon (pCi/l)	330 (±30)	--	None	ORSG is 10,000	No	Naturally occurring in groundwater
<b>Unregulated Constituents</b>						
Methyl tert butyl ether [MTBE] (ppb)	0.6	ND-0.6	Not Regulated [SMCL is 20-40; ORSG is 70]		No	Leaks and spills from gasoline and petroleum storage tanks. Possible laboratory contaminant
Sulfate	32	--	Not Regulated [SMCL is 250]		No	Natural sources.
Sodium (ppm)	44.8	--	Not Regulated [ORSG is 20]		No	Naturally occurring, or from runoff of road salt.

<sup>a</sup>The MDEP, consistent with EPA rules, allows us to sample for some contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations do not change frequently. Fluoride samples were collected in 2001.

<sup>b</sup>The MCL for beta particles is 4 mrem/year. EPA considers 50 pCi/l to be the level of concern for beta particles.

## WATER QUALITY SUMMARY

Based on available data concerning regulated contaminants reviewed for the purpose of this report, results for coliform bacteria have exceeded Federal standards. Below is more information regarding coliform in your drinking water.

### Coliform results:

During routine sampling on July 22, 2003, coliform bacteria were detected in one water sample taken from the raw water at the pump station for Well 3 (prior to chlorination). Immediate action was taken, including monitoring the amount of chlorine added to the system, and resampling with accelerated analysis. Repeat samples were taken from the same sampling location on July 24, 2003 and showed no coliform bacteria. Also, during routine sampling on October 7, 2003, coliform bacteria were detected in a sample collected from the Glennis Sheehan building. A repeat sample, taken with accelerated analysis on October 9, 2003 showed no coliform bacteria.

Coliforms are bacteria that are naturally present in the environment and usually do not pose a risk to health. They are used as an indicator that other, potentially harmful, bacteria may be present. Finding coliforms in more samples than allowed is a warning of other potential problems in the system.

Each time a sample tested positive for coliform bacteria, it was also immediately tested for the presence of fecal coliform, a subset of the coliform group which may be more indicative of a health hazard. No fecal coliform were detected in any sample in 2003.

### Other Results

No other regulated contaminants were detected in your drinking water at or above any MCL or action level. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health is currently conducting several environmental investigations as part of its response to Executive Order 350 (i.e. the Clean State Initiative). Upgrades to the hospital water supply system and operation are continuing in 2003. As more information becomes available, it will be incorporated into future reports.

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and some infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice from their health care providers about drinking water. EPA/Centers for Disease Control guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).

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### **WANT TO KNOW MORE? WANT TO GET INVOLVED?**

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Want to know more about Tewksbury Hospital's drinking water? Please call Bill Kelleher, Director of Facilities 978-851-7321 x2217 or Ruth Alfasso at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Environmental Health Assessment at (617) 624-5757 with any questions, comments, or concerns. Protection of Tewksbury Hospital's water supply, and water resources everywhere, is everyone's concern.